

Meeting Date:

09/30/08

# AGENDA REPORT

City of Santa Clara, California

Agenda Item #

MC-1



**Date:** September 12, 2008

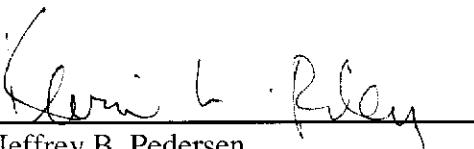
**To:** City Manager for Council Information

**From:** Housing & Community Services Division Manager

**Subject:** Summary of Countywide Programs for the Homeless

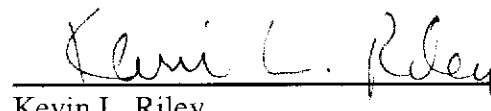
On July 8, 2008, City Council requested that the City Manager prepare a summary report on countywide programs for homelessness for the Council meeting of September 30. The attached discussion and referenced documents address that request. In addition, website addresses containing additional information are included in the Discussion section of this report.

There are currently five parallel initiatives to address homelessness discussed in this report: (1) Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues; (2) County of Santa Clara 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness; (3) Santa Clara County Blue Ribbon Commission on Ending Homelessness and Solving the Affordable Housing Crisis (BRC); (4) Biennial Homeless Census and Survey; and (5) City of Santa Clara 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.



Jeffrey B. Pedersen  
Housing & Community Services Division Manager

APPROVED:



Kevin L. Riley  
Director of Planning & Inspection

APPROVED:



Jennifer Sparacino  
City Manager

*Documents Related to this Report: None*

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **1. Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues:**

This group includes about 150 provider organizations in Santa Clara County. One of its primary activities is to prepare the County's annual Continuum of Care (CofC) Application for federal McKinney-Vento Act funds. Further information is available at [www.collabscc.org](http://www.collabscc.org).

The CofC application includes the most comprehensive list of homeless service providers as well as emergency, transitional and permanent housing facilities available for homeless persons and families. The 2007 CofC Application list of service providers and homeless housing facilities can be obtained at the Collaborative website.

The application identifies 141 agencies that provide services to homeless families and individuals in Santa Clara County. That inventory recognizes 18 service categories and indicates which providers offer what services. Of the providers, 8 have facilities in the City of Santa Clara: Bill Wilson Center, Charities Housing Development, EHC Lifebuilders, Housing Authority of Santa Clara, Kaiser Permanente, Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, Santa Clara Unified School District, and Santa Clara University School of Law.

The application breaks down homeless housing facilities into 3 categories: (1) Emergency Shelter (673 beds countywide); (2) Transitional Supportive Housing, for residency of 1 year or less (1,124 beds countywide); and (3) Permanent Supportive Housing, for residency of 1-2 years, up to 5 years for persons with disabilities (293 beds countywide). The application reported that 347 (1/3 transitional, 2/3 permanent) additional beds were under development in 2007.

Four agencies, with programs that primarily serve City residents, the Bill Wilson Center, EHC Lifebuilders, Next Door and Santa Clara Unified School District received \$1,307,617 from the PY 2007 CofC Application. The total countywide Continuum of Care was awarded \$9,345,250. The 2008 application was submitted in mid-September.

### **2. County of Santa Clara 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness:**

Part of the County's 2005-2010 Consolidated Plan, this document sets forth goals and objectives for the whole County. The full document can be found at [www.sccgov.org/portal/site/oah](http://www.sccgov.org/portal/site/oah), click on "Homeless Concerns." The Interagency Council on Homelessness has defined someone who is "chronically homeless" as "being disabled and being continuously homeless for a year or more or having had at least four homeless episodes during the last three years." That definition does not include families, with children, that have been homeless for similar, extended periods.

On May 3, 2005, the County Board of Supervisors took action to accept and refer to cities for comment the draft document, "Keys to Housing: A 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Santa Clara County". Preparation of the 10-Year Plan by the County's Office of Affordable Housing, included the involvement of a multi-jurisdictional Homeless Task Force to develop a vision for the end of chronic homelessness and prepare a call to action. The City's comments, presented in July, 2005, and comments from other jurisdictions focused on three areas: (1) Continue to support successful projects that contribute to the Continuum of Care; (2) Develop a system of monitoring and accountability of programs to be initiated under the Plan; and (3) Develop a mechanism to ensure fair distribution of required

facilities throughout the County. The Blue Ribbon Commission, discussed below, adopted some elements of this Plan.

The centerpiece of the County's 10-Year Plan is a "Housing First" model. Housing First is an alternative to the system of emergency shelter/transitional housing, considered ineffective because it is seen as prolonging the length of time that families and individuals remain homeless. The Housing First model is premised on the belief that vulnerable and at-risk homeless persons are more responsive to interventions and social services support *after they are in their own housing*, rather than while living in temporary/transitional facilities or housing programs. With permanent housing, these families and individuals can begin to regain the self-confidence and control over their lives that they lost when they became homeless. The Housing First methodology:

- Helps homeless families and individuals move directly into affordable rental housing in residential neighborhoods as quickly as possible;
- Then provides six months to one year of individualized, home-based social services support "after the move" to help each family and individual transition to stability.

A Housing First approach consists of three components:

- **Crisis intervention, emergency services, screening and needs assessment:** Individuals and families who have become homeless have immediate, crisis needs that need to be accommodated, including the provision of emergency shelter. There should be an early screening of the challenges and resources that will affect a personalized re-housing plan.
- **Permanent housing services:** The provision of services to help families' access and sustain housing includes working with the client to identify affordable units, access housing subsidies, and negotiate leases. Clients may require assistance to overcome barriers, such as poor tenant history, credit history and discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, family make-up and income source. Providers may need to develop a roster of landlords willing to work with the program and engage in strategies to reduce disincentives to participate.
- **Case management services:** The provision of case management occurs (1) to ensure individuals and families have a source of income through employment and/or public benefits, and to identify service needs *before the move into permanent housing*; and (2) to work with families *after the move into permanent housing* to help solve problems that may arise that threaten the clients' tenancy including difficulties sustaining housing or interacting with the landlord and to connect families with community-based services to meet long term support/service needs.<sup>1</sup>

Families and individuals with significant barriers to becoming re-housed (e.g., chronic homeless) have been the initial target population for Housing First services. Housing First programs have attempted to target those individuals and families who are most likely to remain in the homeless service system longer without such assistance. Such targeting efforts have resulted in greater emphasis on upfront housing assessments to determine the permanent housing strategy that best meets the individual or family's needs.

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<sup>1</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness: Housing First Network. [www.naeh.org/networks/housingfirst/](http://www.naeh.org/networks/housingfirst/)

**3. Santa Clara County Blue Ribbon Commission on Ending Homelessness and Solving the Affordable Housing Crisis**

In 2007, Santa Clara County created a Blue Ribbon Commission to come up with an action plan to end homelessness and solve the affordable housing crisis. Mayor Mahan was one of the members of the executive committee that adopted the final recommendations and goals. Staff from the City's Housing & Community Services Division participated in three of the Commission's working groups: Prevent Homelessness, Shift to "Housing First", and Increase Housing Supply (Land Use and Finance subgroups).

In a series of meetings in 2007, this Commission developed a set of recommended actions and goals for addressing the issue of affordable housing and homelessness. Those recommendations have been incorporated into a campaign known as "Destination Home." That campaign set the following goals relating to homelessness, to be accomplished by 2015:

1. Develop 3,000 new housing units for chronically homeless, with supportive services.
2. Add 2,000 housing units for extremely low income households.
3. Maintain current levels of support for shelter and transitional housing.
4. Establish a centralized Homeless Prevention Center.
5. Develop a Medical Respite Facility. An area of the Boccardo Reception Center, in San Jose, is being modified to accommodate this need. It is scheduled to open in the Fall, 2008.

**4. Biennial Homeless Census and Survey**

A biennial census/survey is required in order to apply for McKinney-Vento funds. The City has provided funding for the last three census/surveys, the last of which was conducted in 2007. A new survey is scheduled for January, 2009.

The 2007 Census was conducted in the early mornings of January 29-30, 2007. A total of 7,202 homeless persons were counted countywide, a decrease of 5.8% from the 7,646 persons counted in December, 2004. In February and March, 2007, 1,019 surveys of homeless persons were conducted. Those surveys asked 28 questions to determine homeless demographics, information on causes and duration of homelessness, and strengths and weaknesses of the service delivery system. The full reports for 2007 and 2004 are available at [www.sccgov.org/portal/site/oah](http://www.sccgov.org/portal/site/oah) (click on "Homeless Concerns").

**5. City of Santa Clara 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness**

This plan is set forth in the City's Consolidated Plan for the Use of Federal CDBG and HOME Entitlement Grants (CP) for the period July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2010. That plan states the City's goals and objectives in addressing issues of homelessness and how the City's CP coordinates with other countywide efforts. Each year, the City submits a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) summarizing actions and accomplishments in meeting those goals and objectives. Council approved the most recent CAPER, for FY 2007-08, at its September 16 meeting.

Between the 2004 and 2007 censuses, despite the countywide decrease, the number of homeless persons in the City of Santa Clara increased by 33.7%, from 359 to 480. Virtually all that increase was in unsheltered persons. The 2007 number of homeless in the City is 6.7% of the total County homeless population and 8.6% of the total County unsheltered homeless population. The table below categorizes the City's census homeless count into three sub-groups, based on where they were sleeping.

City of Santa Number of Homeless Persons by Enumerated Sub-Group

Census Year	Sheltered	Vehicles	Outdoors	Total
2007	204	70	206	480
2004	200	10	149	359

The City funds St. Justin Community Ministry's Food Assistance for the Needy Program with Community Development Block Grant funds. That program serves over 6,000 extremely low income residents. A portion of the food program provides midday lunches for homeless individuals, 3 days a week. Between January, 2007 and June, 2008, the homeless lunch program served 457 unduplicated individuals, averaging over 120 people served each month in FY 2007-08. St. Justin is not listed in the CofC inventory because of the extensive reporting requirements that are required for participation in the collaborative.

The City has eight residential facilities that provide housing to homeless families and individuals. Those facilities are listed in the table below.

Residential Facilities for Homeless in City of Santa Clara

Organization/Agency	Facility	Address	Capacity
<i>Emergency Shelters</i>			<b>Total Beds</b>
Bill Wilson Center	Youth Shelter	3490 The Alameda	16
<i>Transitional Supportive Housing</i>			<b>Total Units</b>
Bill Wilson Center	Homeless Youth	884 Lafayette Street	3
Bill Wilson Center	Youth Parents with Children	1284 Jackson St.	13
Bill Wilson Center	Homeless Teen Trans Housing	3551 Shafer Dr	3
Bill Wilson Center	Single Teen Trans Housing	2120 Main Street	3
Emergency Housing Consortium	Sobrato Family Living Center	1509 Agnew Rd.	29
Charities Housing/Next Door	HomeSafe Santa Clara	611 El Camino Real	24
<i>Permanent Supportive Housing</i>			
Emergency Housing Consortium	Sobrato Family Living Center	1509 Agnew Rd.	23

Source: Santa Clara County Continuum of Care Plan, 2007/City's Affordable Housing Inventory.

Bill Wilson has acquired a 28-unit apartment, currently undergoing substantial rehabilitation, for at-risk, homeless youths. That facility is projected to be available for occupancy in late 2009.

**Homeless Families:** Members of homeless families make up over half of the homeless population in the City of Santa Clara. Countywide, only 15.9% of homeless persons are in families with children. Single mothers head the majority of homeless families – 80% according to the 2004 Homeless Census. The City has funded support services for homeless families residing in the Sobrato Family Living Center (SFLC) and its predecessor facilities for over 20 years. In FY 2007-08, 209 persons, including 114 children under the age of 18, lived at the SFLC. The last permanent residence of one-third of the families at the SFLC was in the City of Santa Clara.

**Homeless Individuals:** Homeless individuals comprise a little less than half the homeless population in the City of Santa Clara as compared to 84.1% of the homeless population in the County. The overwhelming majority (77%) of single homeless adults are male. EHC Lifebuilders reports that 103 persons residing in shelters outside the City, most of whom were single males, last had a permanent residence in the City. Similar information from other providers within the county is not available.